Ex-police official gunned down in Wana

By Our Correspondent

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: A former police official was gunned down in the Gorgorah area of Wana tehsil in Lower South Waziristan district on Saturday evening.

Police sources said that unidentified assailants targeted Hayatullah Wazir and managed to escape.

Lower South Waziristan district police officer Mohammad Tahir Shah Wazir confirmed the incident, stating that police had begun an investigation.

According to the police sources, Hayatullah was dismissed from the police department on September 16 for absence from duty and violation of departmental rules. Following the murder, fear spread among local residents and police patrols were increased in the area.

Meanwhile, a 13-year-old girl was killed when a mortar shell landed near a house in the Kaza Panga area of Birmal tehsil of Lower South Waziristan on Saturday.

According to in-charge of the police's bomb disposal squad Zabiullah Wazir, the mortar shell landed a few metres away from its intended target and fell beside a house, exploding with a loud blast. As a result, a 13-year-old girl was killed on the spot.

He said the armed men managed to flee from the scene, while the police began an investigation into the incident.

Local residents said the law and order situation in Birmal tehsil had deteriorated alarmingly over the past year.

They said that incidents of bomb blasts, targeted killing, kidnappings for ransom, killings of civilians and attacks on police checkposts had seen a marked rise, leaving the population deeply anxious and insecure.

Residents urged the government, the district administration and the police to take effective measures for restoring peace in the region so that the lives and property of citizens could be protected and normalcy could return to Birmal.

NGO to provide training to tribal journalists

By Our Correspondent

KHYBER: Light Foundation, a non-governmental organisation, signed memorandums of understanding with the Landi Kotal and the Jamrud press clubs for the capacity building of the tribal journalists.

The foundation's chairperson Ms Rifat Ikram signed the MoUs with Aman Ali and Sajid Ali Kukikhel, presidents of Landi Kotal and Jamrud press clubs, respectively.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms Ikram said that her organisation was interested in enhancing the capacity of tribal journalists alongside arranging professional and welfare trainings.

She said that her organisation would also provide wheelchairs, hearing aid to the deaf children, along with digital Holy Qurans to blind family members of both the press club members, if any.

Youth shot dead in Khar Bazaar

By Our Correspondent

BAJAUR: Unknown assailants shot dead a youth in the Khar Bazaar here on Saturday.

Local traders and police said that the youth, identified as Abdullah, was critically injured in the attack and later died at the District Headquarters Hospital, Khar.

According to the traders, the assailants fled after committing the crime. In a statement, the police confirmed the incident, saying that an old enmity could be the cause.

Wildfire on Nawagai mountains extinguished

BAJAUR: A wildfire on three mountains here was finally extinguished on Saturday after it continued for three days, destroying scores of trees in Bajaur's Nawagai town.

Local residents and Rescue 1122 officials said that the fire initially broke out in Babajee Mountain on Thursday morning, quickly engulfing the adjacent Anar Bagh and Sagai Bala mountains due to its intensity.

A team of firefighters was immediately rushed to Babajee Mountain early on Thursday morning, but they failed to control it instantly," said the Rescue 1122 official.

Later, a number of additional firefighters along with local residents were mobilised to the affected mountains, but the fire could not be brought under control even on the second day," the resident of the areas told Dawn.

However, finally the fire was extinguished on Saturday afternoon, confirmed locals including former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governor Shaukatullah Khan, whose house is located in Nawagai town.

The Rescue 1122 Khar station on Saturday in a statement said: "We are pleased to announce that we have completely controlled the fire in Nawagai town's three mountains - Babajee, Anar Bagh, and Sagi Bala - after a three-day successful operation involving over 20 firefighters." — Correspondent

FAMILIES enjoy swings at Chacha Younas Family Park in Peshawar on Saturday. — White Star

KP expects financial integration of erstwhile Fata in NFC Award

Province seeks to align Award with 'ground realities'

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Ahead of 11th National Finance Commission (NFC)'s inaugural meeting scheduled for December 4, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has said that it is focusing on financial merger of the merged areas into federal divisible pool.

Earlier on Friday, KP chief minister Muhammad Sohail Afridi in a media interaction in Islamabad told reporters that he intended to attend NFC inaugural meeting.

He said that he was going to attend the meeting as it was a matter of provincial rights and that the Centre should pay Rs3 trillion of liabilities.

On Saturday, KP adviser to chief minister on finance Muzzammil Aslam in a social media post stated the shared a range of items which the province was expecting from the 11th NFC Award.

He said that the KP was looking towards the financial merger for erstwhile Fata into federal divisible pool. "Currently, merged area gets special grants from federal government. This will pass on the burden on provinces and relief to federal government," he said.

KP government has been of the view that from 7th NFC to 10th NFC, vertical and horizontal distribution remained intact despite25th Amendment (merger of Fata into KP).

The provincial government has been pushing to align NFC with the change in population, geography and backwardness, as post-merger province's revised divisible pool share goes up to 19.64 per cent of the total instead of existing 14.62 per cent.

Mr Aslam also said that the 11th iteration of the NFC Award would also hopefully remove the grievances of small provinces, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan.

He said that the province was also looking towards improvement or reconstitution of the horizontals of provincial horizontals (population, revenue, poverty and reverse population density) and adding climate, water resources, population control, own source revenue collection and human development index as new horizontals

In addition to this, he said that province was also hopeful of retaking non-divisible pool resources which the federal government passed on to provinces without any yard stick (such as subsidies). "In that small provinces are getting less as compared to larger provinces," he said.

Besides, he said that KP was also looking towards complete devolvement of some expenditure borne by federal government to provinces which doesn't belong to the Centre as well as identifying the new avenues to improve revenue to GDP and essentially tax to GDP ratio.

He said that they were also hopeful of serious discussion on provincial finance commission (PFC) and assessment of its current status.

Mr Aslam said that the province also looked up to restructuring and rationalisation of federal expenditures, which were challenging federal government fiscal management.

"Fiscal indiscipline and gaps identified by recent International Monetary Fund corruption diagnosis report may ensure extra resources for federal government without disturbing the 57.5: 41.5: 1 percent vertical distribution," he said.

He said that the province also wanted independent audit of population province-wise.

KP to be first province to enforce QR code-based digital payments

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will become the first province in Pakistan to introduce a comprehensive legal framework aimed at advancing the digital economy when, on Saturday, the chief minister, Muhammad Sohail Afridi, approved 'Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Digital Payments Act 2025'.

The bill, a step towards establishing a modern and transparent economic structure in the province, will be presented before the provincial cabinet for formal approval, read an official statement issued from the chief minister's secretariat.

The chief minister stated that under the new law, payment systems across government departments, businesses and the service sector would be made through a mandatory QR code based digital payments.

He said that the adoption of digital transactions would significantly enhance transparency, financial security and public convenience, the statement read.

Moreover, for a period of two years from the commencement of the Act, digital payments received by a previously undocumented business entity through a QR Code, registered under KP Digital Payments Act 2025, shall not constitute a basis for the imposition of any new direct sales tax liability, so as to encourage formalisation, whereas refusal to accept digital payments or imposing additional charges on such transactions will be treated as a violation of the law.

The statement read that the legislation was aimed at promoting financial inclusion, reducing reliance on cash and moderning the provincial economy.

Mr Afridi clarified that robust protections for both consumer and business data had been ensured, while the entire digital transaction ecosystem would conform to international standards.

"In order to facilitate the public, the provincial government will introduce public Wi-Fi and other digital services in markets and commercial zones," the statement quoted the chief minister as saying.

The statement read that the government would integrate financial and digital literacy into the academic curriculum, while strengthening district-level mechanisms to ensure effective implementation of the law, comprehensive training and the seamless on-boarding of the business community.

Mr Afridi emphasised that the KP was poised to become the country's first cashless model economy, offering a blueprint for the federal government and other provinces to follow.

He said that a modern digital payments system was an essential requirement of the contemporary era and its implementation would not only create ease for citizens and businesses but would also serve as a milestone in improving overall governance.

The chief minister emphasised that the promotion of digital payments would reduce opportunities for corruption, stabilise revenue collection, support data-driven policymaking, enhance institutional performance and, most importantly, strengthen public trust in government institutions.

Operational preparedness of S. Waziristan police force reviewed

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: The district police officer, Muhammad Tahir Shah Wazir, presided over the weekly orderly room at police lines, Wana, on Friday, convening officers and personnel from across the district to review welfare issues, service grievances, operational preparedness and administrative performance.

The session served as a key forum for assessing the overall efficiency, discipline and readiness of the police force in a strategically sensitive region.

The officers during the briefings outlined issues related to duty schedules, rotations, pending transfers, accommodation facilities, residential conditions, uniform supply and logistical support including transport and fuel. Each concern was carefully examined by the DPO, who issued specific directives to ensure timely resolution. Several complaints were addressed on the spot, drawing appreciation from personnel and reinforcing the administration's commitment to addressing legitimate grievances.

Highlighting the critical role of personnel in maintaining law and order, the DPO noted that officers and constables form the backbone of policing in South Waziristan Lower. He emphasised that welfare measures, timely professional training, and the swift resolution of grievances are central to enhancing operational efficiency. "Upholding the rule of law, protecting citizens' rights and ensuring public safety remains the core mission of our police. Every officer must demonstrate integrity, discipline and professionalism in all duties," he said.

Directing senior officers to take a proactive approach in resolving pending matters, the DPO stressed the importance of effective communication with subordinate staff. Policing in South Waziristan Lower, he noted, carries heightened responsibilities due to the district's strategic and sensitive nature, requiring constant vigilance, operational readiness, and exemplary conduct. — Correspondent

IMF report exposed corrupt practices of federal govt: PTI leader

Sheikh Waqas condemns Imran's 'solitary confinement'

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf central information secretary Sheikh Waqas Akram said here on Saturday that the recent report of International Monetary Fund (IMF) exposed corrupt practices and poor performance of federal government.

Speaking at a press conference, he said that federal government's silence and not rejecting or giving any clarification over the IMF report showed that the report was based on facts. The press conference was also attended by KP Minister for Excise Syed Fakhar Jehan and PTI deputy information secretary Ikram Katana.

Mr Akram said that the IMF report exposed serious governance and financial irregularities in the country. "The report has exposed the performance of federal government. In a world driven by data, IMF has published detailed indicators that have raised major concerns," he added.

He said that the IMF document highlighted corruption amounting to Rs5.3 trillion, with details spread over 180 pages. He said that the report declared the mentioned Rs5.3 trillion corruption as a small fraction of the actual corrupt practices.

The PTI leader also demanded explanation from Federal Minister Attaullah Tarar and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and asked them to inform the nation about the report. "If IMF's claims are incorrect, the government must respond. The silence on the part of federal government over the report has raised questions," he added.

He criticised rising costs, alleged misuse of contracts and political interference in tendering processes. According to the report, he said, the state has no grip on the economy while the underdeveloped countries have their hold on their economies.

"The report has linked the government decisions with political patronage, favours and recommendations," said Mr Akram. He said that government companies were given contracts without competitions, leaving no space for private firms to participate in the healthy competition. That was why IMF declared public procumbent as the most corrupt sector of the country, he added.

He said that the report revealed that 60 per cent of bank loans were taken by federal government for hiding its deficits.

"How private sector will grow if the major share of loan is taken by government? The banking sector has become an extended branch of federal finance department," he said.

The PTI leader said that the report also exposed irregularities in investments in Pakistan. He said that selected firms having backing of political parties usually got loans in the name of investments that were mostly never returned.

He said that IMF also underscored weaknesses in judiciary, saying millions of cases were pending in the courts while dozens of courts and tribunals were busy in distributing powers. He alleged that foreign and local investors lost trust in courts as they were not expecting to get justice related to their investments.

Mr Akram said that powers of government departments were overlapping owing to which opportunities of corruptions were increasing. Referring to prolonged restrictions on meetings with PTI founder Imran Khan, he said that preventing family members and lawyers from meeting him was a violation of basic legal rights.

He stated that even under older prison laws and colonial-era practices, families were allowed access to detainees. "The court has repeatedly granted permission, yet meetings are not allowed," he added.

He also condemned the alleged solitary confinement of Imran Khan. "Keeping a political prisoner locked 22 hours a day is extreme injustice. "Even the KP chief minister attempted to meet the PTI founder seven times, but he was stopped outside the prison each time," he said.